

Proposed General Plan Update Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Zero Waste

San Jose is recognized as a leader in waste diversion and the City's Zero Waste strategy is a key contributor to the City's Green Vision, to advancing Environmental Leadership and to achieving a greener community. To implement this strategy, the City will continue to maximize diversion of waste from landfills, reduce the generation of waste, provide quality waste management service delivery, and ensure that the City's zero waste programs are fiscally sustainable.

Environmental Leadership

Goal ZW-1 Establish San José as a nationally recognized leader in reducing the amount of materials entering the solid waste stream through the development and implementation of innovative plans and policies.

Goal ZW-1 Leadership Policies

- Policy ZW-1.1 Support progressive and innovative zero waste legislation locally, regionally, and statewide.
- Policy ZW-1.2 Foster and promote the development and commercialization of new technologies that support the City's Zero Waste goals.
- Policy ZW-1.3 Continue to support the development of green jobs through investment in zero waste programs and infrastructure.
- Policy ZW-1.4 Promote City operations that serve as a model for achieving zero waste.
- Policy ZW-1.5 Engage stakeholders to build consensus on zero waste programs and mandates.

Goal ZW-1 Leadership Actions

- Action ZW-1.6 Maintain and periodically update the Zero Waste Strategic Plan to establish criteria and strategies for achieving zero waste including reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Action ZW-1.7 Evaluate local ordinances or enforcement actions that would result in improved methane control and capture at landfills in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide an additional fuel source in the near-term.
- Action ZW-1.8 Participate as a model city in the development of the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) Organics Roadmap to minimize green waste disposed in landfills, such as compost market development, compost specification and use requirements.

- Action ZW-1.9 Develop a schedule to discontinue the use of disposable, toxic or non-renewable products as outlined in the Urban Environmental Accords. Discontinue City use of at least one such item each year throughout the planning period.
- Action ZW-1.10 Develop an incentives program to grow local markets for recyclable and reusable materials, including items such as paper, compost, and construction materials.
- Action ZW-1.11 Promote the development of energy conversion technologies for converting residual wastes into energy.
- Action ZW-1.12 Support adoption of new technologies, including collection, sorting, and processing, that can maximize waste stream materials recovery.
- Action ZW-1.13 Support the development of technologies that harness and use biogas resources from landfills and diverted organics. Work with stakeholders to establish landfill gas-to-energy systems and waste heat recovery systems.
- Action ZW-1.14 Provide on-going education about the environmental benefits of reducing wasteful consumption (e.g. the avoidance of products with excessive packaging, choosing to purchase refills, the separation of food and yard waste for composting, and the use of rechargeable batteries).

Environmental Citizenship

- Goal ZW-2** Establish San José as a model for local, regional, and statewide for innovation in zero waste and the responsible management of resources.

Goal ZW-2 Citizenship Policies

- Policy ZW-2.1 Encourage businesses to adopt “upstream” redesign strategies to reduce the volume and toxicity of discarded products and materials while promoting less wasteful lifestyles.
- Policy ZW-2.2 Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions in the near-term to evaluate and consider regional landfill bans, particularly for organic materials such as food waste and yard trimmings that contribute to methane generation in landfills.
- Policy ZW-2.3 Participate in the development of climate change and carbon offset protocols, plans and regulations being developed by State and other agencies, such as the California Air Resources Board and CCAR, to ensure that recycling, composting and anaerobic digestion are appropriately measured for their climate change impacts.
- Policy ZW-2.4 Manage wastes locally to the greatest extent feasible to minimize the export of wastes and pollution to other communities.

Goal ZW-2 Citizenship Actions

- Action ZW-2.5 Incorporate Environmentally Preferable Procurement Policies (EP3) and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) principles and practices into City operations and City-sponsored events.
- Action ZW-2.6 Encourage businesses in San Jose to adopt EP3 and EPR principles and practices and recognize San José businesses that showcase exemplary EP3 and EPR practices.

Waste Diversion

- Goal ZW-3** Divert 100% of waste from landfills by 2022 and maintain 100% diversion through 2040.

Goal ZW-3 Diversion Policies

- Policy ZW-3.1 Maximize recycling and composting from all residents, businesses, and institutions in the City.
- Policy ZW-3.2 Implement mixed-waste recycling of garbage and recycling processing residue to ensure that all recyclable and compostable materials are diverted from landfills.
- Policy ZW-3.3 Continue to evaluate the recycling collection process in order to improve the potential reuse and marketability of recycled materials.
- Policy ZW-3.4 Develop goals and methods to discontinue the use of landfills for waste disposal.
- Policy ZW-3.5 Explore opportunities and methods to harvest buried resources from existing landfills.

Goal ZW-3 Diversion Actions

- Action ZW-3.6 Develop ordinances to target reduction of single-use goods (such as carryout bags and non-recyclable/non-compostable take-out food packaging).
- Action ZW-3.7 Increase program participation and reduce disposal of recyclable materials through intensive outreach, incentives, enforcement or mandates.
- Action ZW-3.8 Enhance the construction and demolition debris recycling program to increase diversion from the building sector.
- Action ZW-3.9 Revise landscaping specifications to align with state recommended guidelines that incorporate Integrated Pest Management and to support use of mulch and compost.

- Action ZW-3.10 Enact regional landfill bans during the near- and mid-terms for organic material such as food waste and yard trimmings that contribute to methane generation in landfills.
- Action ZW-3.11 Assess opportunities for implementing other material bans at landfills.
- Action ZW-3.12 Expand programs and facilities that accept hazardous and hard to recycle materials.
- Action ZW-3.13 Develop promotional/educational programs to increase recycling by occupants of multi-family buildings.

Waste Reduction

Goal ZW-4 Reduce generation of solid and hazardous waste materials.

Goal ZW-4 Reduction Policies

- Policy ZW-4.1 Maximize reuse, recycling, and composting citywide.
- Policy ZW-4.2 Reduce the initial generation of waste materials by increasing the residential and commercial use of reusable products.
- Policy ZW-4.3 Support programs and incentives to reduce the manufacture and use of materials that are non-recyclable or hazardous to people and the environment.
- Policy ZW-4.4 Encourage the use of locally extracted, manufactured or recycled and reused materials including construction materials and compost.
- Policy ZW-4.5 Improve “downstream” reuse and recycling of end-of-life products and materials to ensure their highest and best use.
- Policy ZW-4.6 Collaborate and partner with other local organizations to determine effective methods to reuse or recover potentially toxic or hard-to-recycle materials.

Goal ZW-4 Reduction Actions

- Action ZW-4.7 Adopt and implement programs that reduce the amount of materials entering the waste stream.
- Action ZW-4.8 Reduce the amount of waste disposed in landfills through waste prevention, reuse, and recycling of materials at venues, facilities, and special events.
- Action ZW-4.9 Advocate at the State level for higher disposal fees for products that are designed for single use and for products that do not incorporate any post-consumer recycled content.

Service Delivery

Goal ZW-5

Operate a municipal solid waste management system that maximizes efficiencies in service delivery while protecting the environment, public health, and safety.

Goal ZW-5 Service Delivery Policies

- Policy ZW-5.1 Periodically review the industrial land supply within the City's Urban Service Area to accommodate anticipated zero waste facility needs.
- Policy ZW-5.2 Coordinate long-range planning processes (e.g. Specific Plans, neighborhood Plans and other special land use studies) to preserve existing industrial lands and to identify appropriate locations for waste management infrastructure and energy conversion facilities.
- Policy ZW-5.3 Collaborate with outside agencies and the solid waste management industry to develop innovative waste/residue processing methods.
- Policy ZW-5.4 Collaborate with providers of solid waste collection, disposal and recycling services to ensure a level of service that promotes a clean environment.
- Policy ZW-5.5 Continue to improve customer service for Zero Waste programs by providing a broad range of programs and service options and through responsiveness to customer needs.
- Policy ZW-5.6 Conduct Zero Waste programs and initiatives in a manner that is convenient, accessible, equitable and effective for all intended participants. Design programs and provide incentives in order to maximize the program's effectiveness.

Goal ZW-5 Service Delivery Actions

- Action ZW-5.7 Consider and initiate General Plan and zoning changes to facilitate relocation and establishment of materials recovery and waste-to-energy industries.
- Action ZW-5.8 Evaluate new collection and processing options (such as co-collecting yard trimmings and food scraps for anaerobic digestion at the Water Pollution Control Plant).
- Action ZW-5.9 Adopt standards that require new development to provide designated areas for garbage and recycling collection.
- Action ZW-5.10 Adopt standards that ensure adequate access for solid waste collection vehicles, including: vertical clearances, vehicle turn radiuses, appropriate street widths and curb lengths for container set-outs, and street inclines.

- Action ZW-5.11 Design and construct a centralized facility within the City offering household hazardous waste collections, building materials re-use, and sustainability education and training.
- Action ZW-5.12 Provide convenient locations throughout the City for collection of household hazardous wastes and bulk wastes.
- Action ZW-5.13 Utilize programs to control litter and illegal dumping.

Fiscal Sustainability

Goal ZW-6 Maintain a sound financial model that can sustain the City's Zero Waste programs and enable long-term delivery of quality solid waste management services to the community.

Goal ZW6 Fiscal Sustainability Policies

- Policy ZW-6.1 Achieve 100% cost-recovery in commercial, residential, and construction and demolition programs.
- Policy ZW-6.2 Minimize customer rates while providing rate equity to all customers.
- Policy ZW-6.3 Consider environmental and social costs in all decision-making and budget decisions
- Policy ZW-6.4 Continue to collaborate with other jurisdictions to increase recycling market development program funding at the State level.

Goal ZW6 Fiscal Sustainability Actions

- Action ZW-6.5 Develop long-term alternative fee-based options to address the impact of waste diversion activities on the General Fund and Integrated Waste Management Fund.
- Policy ZW-6.6 Explore alternative revenue streams such as implementing Solid Waste Development Impact Fees, Street Sweeping Fees, or Extended Producer Responsibility Fees.
- Policy ZW-6.7 Evaluate and address the potential impacts of program initiatives on system fees (hauling, tipping, and franchise).
- Policy ZW-6.8 Continue to support a statewide landfill surcharge to fund local programs and facilities including an exemption for locally enacted landfill fees or other statewide solutions to address low cost regional landfill issues.
- Policy ZW-6.9 Examine the remaining capacity at local landfills to assess future alternatives to the Disposal Facility Tax.